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**BRADFORD BURYING GROUND, HAVERHILL, APPROVED FOR NOMINATION TO THE  
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**

Secretary of the Commonwealth William F. Galvin is pleased to announce that the Massachusetts Historical Commission approved the Bradford Burying Ground in Haverhill for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places at its March meeting. The nomination has been submitted to the National Register of Historic Places at the National Park Service in Washington, DC, for final consideration and designation.

“The Massachusetts Historical Commission is dedicated to preserving the Commonwealth’s rich historic, architectural, archaeological, and cultural resources,” Secretary Galvin said. “Inclusion of the Bradford Burying Ground in the National Register will help raise public awareness about the historic significance of this early burial place, which holds an impressive collection of distinctive Merrimac Valley funerary art in Haverhill.”

The Bradford Burying Ground, which contains more than 700 graves, occupies 1 ½ acres on Salem Street, near Haverhill’s Bradford Village. The first settlers of Bradford, which became part of Haverhill in 1897, established the burying ground in 1665. The earliest extant legible stone dates to 1689, but unmarked graves in the burying ground may be earlier. One of Haverhill’s oldest places of burial, the Bradford Burying Ground is also the site of Bradford’s first meetinghouse (1671) and second meetinghouse; the latter was used from 1706 until 1751, when a new meetinghouse was built elsewhere in the town.

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Most stones here date to the 18<sup>th</sup> and first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. The earliest include a number of three-lobed, schist head and footstones. Many were carved by important regional carvers, including Lt. John Hartshorne and the Mullicken family, who used motifs such as blank faces, corner finials with spirals or pie shapes, and side borders with vertical scrolls or vines, in contrast to the stark, winged-skull symbolism favored by Boston carvers. The burial ground also includes many tall, thin slate markers with winged heads and the popular late 18<sup>th</sup>- and early 19<sup>th</sup>-century urn-and-willow motif. Stones from this period include the work of carvers such as Benjamin Day and Theodore Warren of Lowell, William Farnsworth of Groton, and F.A. Brown & N. Story of Haverhill.

There are a few marble markers scattered throughout the burial ground dating to the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, by which time fewer burials took place at the site. The most recent historic resource in the Bradford Burying Ground is a stone wall at the front of the property, constructed using Works Progress Administration (WPA) funds in 1935. The city of Haverhill currently owns and cares for the burial ground, with the help of concerned volunteers.

The Bradford Burying Ground is one of 7 historic resources around the Commonwealth approved for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places by the Massachusetts Historical Commission at this meeting.

Secretary Galvin serves as Chairman of the 17-member board, which meets regularly and considers historic resources eligible for the National Register four times a year.

The National Register is the nation's official listing of significant historic resources. In Massachusetts, there are more than 70,000 properties listed in the National Register. The Massachusetts Historical Commission has been administering the National Register of Historic Places program in Massachusetts since 1966.

The Massachusetts Historical Commission is the office of the State Historic Preservation Officer and the State Archaeologist. It was established in 1963 to identify, evaluate, and protect important historical and archaeological assets of the Commonwealth. Visit our website to learn more about the Commission's programs ([www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc](http://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc)).

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